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XX.—HUDIBRAS IN GERMANY.

During the eighteenth century several attempts were made to translate the whole or parts of Butler's *Hudibras* into German. Josua Eiselein, who published a translation of *Hudibras* in 1845, gave in his introduction the only account of these translations yet written,¹ but his record is brief and inaccurate. Hence it may not be without value to re-examine Butler's work in its German forms, and, in addition, to investigate the position of *Hudibras* among those works which German admiration for English literature sought to introduce into Germany.

The earliest German references to Butler's poem are probably those in the notes and introduction which Christian Wernicke (1661-1725) added to his *Überschriften* in the edition of 1704, the last edition with which the author was personally concerned. Wernicke's mother was an Englishwoman, and Wernicke himself spent much time in England, where he had, it is probable, a considerable acquaintance with aristocratic circles at a time when the objects of Butler's satire were still fresh in memory. In his notes Wernicke quotes and translates two very brief passages from *Hudibras*, and in the introduction he paraphrases another. These references to *Hudibras* are merely incidental illustrations and do not in any way constitute an introduction of Butler to German readers. And, beyond this, Wernicke's book and even his name were almost completely forgotten by his contemporaries, and the worth

¹ Goedeke, *Grundriss*, VII, p. 713: "Übersetzungen des *Hudibras* mit Proben verzeichnet in Josua Eiseleins Verdeutschung des *Hudibras*."

of the *Überschriften* was not recognized till much later. Hence we may regard Wernicke's own acquaintance with *Hudibras* as a result of his peculiar privilege of birth and residence; and in any case these early allusions to Butler had practically no contemporary influence in directing attention to the poem.¹

¹ For Wernicke see Fulda, *DNL.*, 39, Erich Schmidt, *Allgemeine deutsche Biographie*, W. G. Howard, *Pub. Mod. Lang. Ass.* for September, 1908, and Rudolf Pechel, *Chr. Wernickes Epigramme*, in *Palaestra*, 71, Berlin, 1909. Bodmer called attention to Wernicke's importance and published editions of the *Überschriften* in 1749 and 1763. The following are Wernicke's references to *Hudibras* (edition of 1763): p. 79, Wernicke quotes two lines from *Hudibras* (I. 679-70) containing a commendation of brevity; p. 224, he quotes four lines beginning, "Th' extreams of Glory and of Shame" (Pt. 2, I, 271-4). The first is introduced by: "und Hudibras uns nicht weit verführet, wenn er saget," and the second by "Es sind nicht meine, sondern des berühmten Buttlers Worte, wie sie in seinem sinnreichen englischen Knittelgedichte, *Hudibras* genannt, folgender massen zu finden sind." In the introduction Wernicke remarks: "Die meisten derselben (Frauenzimmer) bilden sich wie des Hudibras Wittwe ein: Es sei der Poet nicht in den falschen Achat ihrer Augen, sondern in die wahre Diamanten ihrer Ohren; nicht in die Perlen ihres Mundes, sondern in die Perlenschnur ihres Halses; nicht in das Gold ihrer Haare, sondern in die Dukaten, die in ihrem Kasten liegen, verliebt;" which is a free paraphrase of a passage in the "Lady's Answer to the Knight." Wernicke may possibly have had *Hudibras* in mind when on p. 63 he said that German was nothing but a "babylonische Thurmsprache," cf. *Hudibras*, I, 93, or when on page 112 he referred to the opinion that the angel spoke German in expelling Adam and Eve from Paradise, cf. *Hudibras*, I, 179-80. Wernicke uses "Knittelverse" with considerable frequency in his *Überschriften*; he suggests the word "Knittelgedicht" for "what the French call Poème Burlesque (p. 61); and defends the rhymes "Staat an" and "Satan," "Dichterling" and "Palatin," as "der Kunst gemäss" and "ein unterscheidendes Zeichen der Knittelgedichte" (pp. 237-8). He adds concerning such rhymes: "So gar, dass, wer dergleichen Verse aus Kurzweil schreibt, nicht allein dieselben nicht vermeiden, sondern mit allem Fleiss aufsuchen muss."

The first effort to introduce *Hudibras* into Germany was made by Bodmer, whose translation of the first two cantos appeared in 1737. Bodmer probably first read of *Hudibras* in Addison's essay on "Laughter and Ridicule" in the *Spectator*, No. 249, and Th. Vetter, who in the recent memorial volume on Bodmer¹ has written briefly of Bodmer's interest in *Hudibras*, suggests that Bodmer's curiosity may have been further aroused by a note in commendation of Butler's work in the French translation of the *Spectator*, which indeed Bodmer knew before he read the original. Though Bodmer was later responsible for a renewed interest in Wernicke's *Überschriften*, there is no proof that he knew anything about Wernicke before 1724, when Ulrich König in a letter to Bodmer gave some account of Wernicke's work and some facts of his life, but "all in a way which shows plainly that he was dealing with a completely unknown author."² Bodmer knew the *Spectator* in the French translation as early as 1718.

Vetter thinks that Bodmer probably borrowed *Hudibras* from Dr. Zellweger in Trogen, but at precisely what time he is unable to say. In writing to his friend, May 30, 1723, Bodmer remarked: "Ich verlange Tolands und Rochesters. Endlich vermeine ich, dass Milton's *Paradis*

When in the service of Graf Büнау (1748-1754), Winckelmann read widely in English literature and made an anthology of English poets the manuscript of which, in his hand, is now in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. There are particularly extensive extracts from *Hudibras*. See Karl Justi, *Winckelmann in Deutschland* (*Winckelmann und seine Zeitgenossen*, Vol. I.) Leipzig, 1898, pp. 221-224. For this reference I am indebted to Mr. W. G. Howard, of Harvard University, who also kindly called my attention to Wernicke.

¹ Joh. Jac. Bodmer, *Denkschrift z. CC. Geburtstag*, Zürich, 1900. See also Vetter's monograph, *Zürich als Vermittlerin englischer Literatur im achtzehnten Jahrhundert*, Zürich, 1891.

² See Fulda, *DNL.*, 39, p. 521.

lost oder Buttler's *Hudibras* mein Ergötzen seyn würde." ¹ The loan took place quite probably at this time. In a letter from Bodmer to Johann Michael von Loen, ² dated January 12, 1729, there is a quotation from *Hudibras*, a proof of continued interest during the years between this earlier acquaintance and the translation in 1737.

The title of Bodmer's translation is *Versuch einer deutschen Übersetzung von Samuel Butler's Hudibras, einem satirischen Gedichte wider die Schwermer und Independen-ten zur Zeit Carls des Ersten*. Franckfurt und Leipzig, 1737. The book is small octavo and contains seventy-nine pages of text preceded by an introduction of fourteen pages. Bodmer's translation is in prose and, as noted above, comprises only the first two cantos. The preface, as the first introduction of *Hudibras* to the German public, is significant. After commenting on the need of a prefatory word of explanation, Bodmer gives a short account of Butler's life. He then turns to the poem itself. In direct though unacknowledged dependence on Addison, Bodmer divides burlesque poetry into two kinds—that which presents an insignificant character in the guise of a hero, and that in which a heroic character is degraded. Bodmer, representing the Swiss opposition to rhyme, naturally minimizes the importance of the external form of the poem. In treating of Hudibrastic verse, Bodmer, either through his insufficient knowledge of English or as a result of his prejudice against rhyme, attributes to Addison an opinion which is not a reasonable inference from Addison's own words. Bodmer says of Addison: "Er fürchte, eine grosse Anzahl von denen, welche den

¹ Quoted by Vetter.

² Vetter refers for this letter to *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung*, 1856, p. 34.

unvergleichlichen Hudibras bewundern, thun solches vielmehr in Ansehn dieser Doppel-Reimen, als derjenigen Stellen, welche in der That wunderwürdig sind." What Addison really did say was: "If Hudibras had been set out with as much wit and humor in heroic verse as he is in doggerel, he would have made a much more agreeable figure than he does; though the generality of his readers are so wonderfully pleased with the double rhymes that I do not expect many will be of my opinion in this particular,"—which is something quite different. Bodmer says in this connection, strangely enough, that English verse allows no feminine or double rhymes except in comic poetry. This same question of the relation of the form to the worth of the poem is discussed also a little further on, when Bodmer seeks to account for the absence of previous attempts at translation. This is ascribed in part to the impossibility of rendering Butler's rhymes in German and the opinion that half of his spirit would be lost without them. "But," says Bodmer, "such an objection could only be made by those of depraved taste, who find merriment and wit in the mere similarity of letters and sounds." Bodmer notes that Butler's style is very prosaic and hence would lose very little in a prose translation. Such a translation, he says, "welche treu und ausdrucksam ist, wird uns durch Abschneidung der Cadentz, des Sylbenmasses, und des Schalls der Reimen, nur das Geräusche aus dem Wege räumen, welches uns hindert, Butler's Art sich die Dinge vorzustellen, ohne Zerstreung einzusehen."

The notes on Butler's life, the general statement of his purpose in writing *Hudibras* and the brief account of historical conditions, are all derived directly from the anonymous introduction to *Hudibras*, first printed in the edition of 1704. Copying almost verbally from his

source, Bodmer says that Butler had in the employ of Sir Samuel Luke "die beste Gelegenheit, diese lebendigen Charactere von Gleissnerey, Aberwitz, Wahnsinnigkeit, und Meineid kennen zu lehren," and that the main purpose of the poem was, "die Feuerbläser in der Kirche und dem Staat durchzuhecheln, welche unter dem Vorwand der Religion den König Carl ermordet, ein eigenmächtiges Regiment eingeführet, und Gleissnerey, Heuchelei, und Schwärmerey auf den Thron gesetzt." The English editor referred for historical information to Foulis's *History of Presbyterianism*¹ and Walker's *History of Independency* and particularly to Clarendon; Bodmer makes similar reference but omits the names of the first two authors. The inference is that Bodmer had no opinions of his own relative to the great rebellion in England and copied the anti-Roundhead introduction of the English editor, perhaps not realizing how its sweeping denunciation would involve his own literary idol, Milton. Bodmer expressed in this introduction the hope that his fragment might induce some other translator to render the whole into German. A reason why he himself did not continue the work is to be found in a letter written to Zellweger, July 22, 1747, ten years after the publication of the two cantos. In it Bodmer says: "Ihr könnt jedermann sagen, dass ich den *Hudibras* nicht fortsetzen werde: die Deutschen sind noch überhaupt zu unempfindlich für seine feinen Stiche. Wenn sie erst eine Empfindung davon bekommen, so haben sie den *Stilum familiarem* besser im Besitz als die Schweizer und können diese Arbeit geschickter ausführen."² Bodmer supplied

¹ *The History of the Wicked Plots and Conspiracies of our pretended Saints, the Presbyterians.* London, 1662, Oxford, 1674.

² Baechtold, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur in der Schweiz*, notes, p. 175.

but four notes to his two cantos; of these, three are taken from English editions, two appearing in that of 1674, and repeated in later editions, and the third added in the edition of 1710. The fourth note is original and explains that the word "Kirchenreformation," used in the description of Heinz (Ralpho), refers to the "falsche Reformation der fanatischen Independenten." Bodmer was evidently alarmed lest his German readers might here understand the Lutheran Reformation.

Gottsched reviewed Bodmer's attempt in his *Beiträge zur kritischen Historie der deutschen Sprache, Poesie und Beredsamkeit*.¹ Most of this article is a repetition of information afforded in Bodmer's work. The critic differs from Bodmer only in reference to the question of the use of prose or verse in the translation. It is noted that the *Froschmäuseler* was written in "Knittelverse," and the opinion is expressed that *Hudibras* would sound doubly droll in such a translation. Gottsched hopes that Bodmer will continue the translation and that some one will turn the prose into verses, "und zwar in solche, die hübsch altfränkisch klingen." Gottsched quotes two passages from Bodmer's work, the first fourteen lines and the address to the Muse (lines 645-664). As an exemplification of his opinions relative to the superiority of a translation in verse, he turns the first passage into "Knittelverse." To what extent Gottsched was acquainted with the original poem it is not possible to determine from this review. In the first words of the review, acquaintance is implied; here he states that the beauty of the original, a masterpiece of its kind, and the strength of the translation induced him to give a detailed account. Though it be

¹ Herausgegeben von einigen Mitgliedern der deutschen Gesellschaft in Leipzig. 17tes Stück. Leipzig, 1737, pp. 167-176.

recognized that he intended only to versify Bodmer's prose, it is noteworthy that there is in his lines no hint of the original. He makes twenty-five lines of what in Butler is only fourteen. His use of Bodmer may be illustrated by a few quotations.

- | | | |
|-----|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (1) | Original | "When civil dudgeon first grew high"— |
| | Bodmer | "Die Hitze war jetzt bey Bürgern und Bauern
aufs höchste gestiegen." |
| | Gottsched | "Itzt war die Hitz in Städt'n und Maur'n
So hoch gestiegen, als bey'n Bauer'n." |
| (2) | Original | "When hard words, jealousies and fears
Set folks together by the ears." |
| | Bodmer | "Bittre Worte, Neid und Furcht banden Städten
und Gemeinden die Haare zusammen und
brachten sie in den Harnisch." |
| | Gottsched | "Furcht, Hass und Neid mit bittern Worten
Banden schon dem Volk an allen Orten
Die Haar zusamm, macht' alles frisch
Bracht' jedermann in den Harnisch." |
| (3) | Original | "Then did Sir Knight abandon dwelling
And out he rode a-colonelling." |
| | Bodmer | "Als der Herr Ritter seine Wohnung verliess
und auf einen Strauss ausritt." |
| | Gottsched | "Als unser Rittersmann sein Haus
Verliess und ausritt auf einen Strauss." |

Gottsched refers to Hudibras's squire as Heinz, the name which Bodmer gives him.

In 1764, J. J. Dusch published his *Briefe zur Bildung des Geschmacks an einen jungen Herrn von Stande*, a kind of compendium of literary culture. In his chapter on the comic epic he translated quite freely from *Hudibras*, giving in all about twelve hundred lines in prose. He admitted that the poem lost much in this form, but thought it too difficult to invent a metre corresponding to the original. A later edition of Dusch's work (1770) contained a few trivial changes.

The first complete translation of *Hudibras* was published in 1765. It was in prose and was the work of Johann Heinrich Waser.¹ Waser was from 1746 to his death in 1777 Diaconus at Winterthur, was a member of the Zürich literary circle, and an intimate friend of Bodmer's. He is best known as a translator of Swift and Lucian. It is probable that his interest in English literature came from his acquaintance with Bodmer, and possibly the impulse to translate *Hudibras* may be attributed to the same source. Whether or not Waser was first directed to *Hudibras* by Bodmer, there was certainly much in Waser's temperament and tastes akin to the spirit of the poem. The authors whom he chose to translate are a testimony to his love of wit, satire, and burlesque. He is said to have had a rare talent for aping other people's peculiarities; "er war wie zum kaustischen Spott geboren," it was said of him,² though Bodmer thought that such an idea did him injustice, that he was "böse nur auf den Irrthum und die Bosheit," and calls him

¹ Samuel Butler's *Hudibras*, ein satyrisches Gedicht wider die Schwärmer und Independenten zur Zeit Carls des Ersten, in neun Gesängen, aus dem Englischen übersetzt, mit historischen Anmerkungen und Kupfern versehen, Hamburg und Leipzig, 1765. The book was really published in Zürich. Waser's name is given by Goedeke as Heinrich only. Brief accounts of Waser's translation are found in Vetter's two monographs: *Zürich als Vermittlerin*, see above, and *Johann Heinrich Waser, Diakon zu Winterthur, ein Vermittler englischer Literatur, Neujahrsblatt herausgegeben von der Stadtbibliothek in Zürich auf das Jahr 1898*, pp. 31. See also Hirzel's article on Waser in the *Vierteljahrsschrift für Litteraturgeschichte*, V, pp. 301-312 (1892).

² Raumer, *Historisches Taschenbuch*, x, p. 415, or Hirzel, *Wieland und Martin und Regula Künzli*, Leipzig, 1891, p. 11. Hirzel attributes this characterization to Wieland and refers to Raumer, but Raumer does not ascribe it directly to Wieland.

“den lehrenden Lacher, den sanften, nicht den boshaften Satir.”¹

Waser's translation met with opposition from the Zürich censors, an opposition which Waser had feared for his Swift. Bodmer says in his tribute to Waser, published in the *Deutsches Museum* some years after Waser's death: “Seiner Person wehe zu thun, wandte ein mächtiger Priester sein ganzes Ansehn an, die Übersetzung zu unterdrücken. . . . Eine Schutzschrift, die Waser schrieb, machte das Übel noch ärger.” This powerful clergyman was Johann Konrad Wirz. The efforts of Bodmer and Breitinger were fruitless, and the permission of the censor could not be obtained; so the publishers dodged the issue and printed on the title page, “Hamburg und Leipzig” instead of Zürich. The defence which Bodmer mentions is shown by Hirzel² to have been probably only a letter written by Waser to his publishers: this contained an elaborate vindication of his position, and Waser gave the publishers permission to make what use of it they chose.

The introduction to Waser's translation, which covers nineteen pages, is ostensibly by another hand; but Hirzel, though without giving his reasons, asserts that Waser doubtless wrote it himself. In it the Latin inscription on Butler's tomb is given, but one is referred to Chauffepié's *Dictionary* for further information concerning Butler's life. The rest of the introduction treats chiefly of the historical background. The information is derived

¹ *Denkmaal dem Übersetzer Buttlers, Swifts und Luzians errichtet von Joh. Jak. Bodmer, Deutsches Museum*, 1784, 1, pp. 511-527.

² *Vierteljahrschrift für Literaturgeschichte*, see above. Hirzel gives the letter in full. Vetter's two monographs mentioned above give similar information relative to this controversy.

from Hume, and the cause of the Independents is severely condemned. Waser made use of three different editions of Butler's original. From a note on page 8 we know that he followed principally the edition of 1689. He quotes the lines about wooing a widow which were published only in the editions of 1704, 1710, and 1726. The elaborately annotated edition of *Hudibras* published by Zachary Grey in 1744 was also in Waser's possession; for he copied a large proportion of his numerous notes, five-sixths or even more, directly or in condensed form from Grey's commentary. Waser's additional notes are thus comparatively few and unimportant. Waser made no acknowledgment of his large indebtedness, but near the end of the first canto in connection with the lines:

"So have I seen, with armèd heel
A wight bestride a Common-weal" (925-6),

he says that Grey, "von dem man eine Ausgabe unsers Verfassers hat" had explained this as a reference to Richard Cromwell; he then goes on to note the different explanation which is given in the French translation by Townley.¹ There are other references to Townley's work.² Waser's translation contained nine illustrations.³

The *Göttingsche Anzeigen von gelehrten Sachen*⁴ reviewed Waser's translation very briefly; the reviewer (Haller) thinks the meaning of this difficult poet well retained; but complains that the droll swing of the rhymes is lost in the translation. He is also of the opinion that the use of the Latin in the German rendering is less

¹ John Townley's translation was published anonymously in 1757.

² Pp. 379-80, and 493.

³ According to the review in the *Neue Bibliothek der schönen Wissenschaften* these illustrations were by Gessner.

⁴ 1766, I, p. 32.

effective than in the original. The *Neue Bibliothek der schönen Wissenschaften*¹ gave Waser's book a long review. The notes and introduction are declared excellent, and, though the translation of individual lines is criticised and examples of inaccuracies are given, it is stated that these minor defects detract very little from the worth of the translation as a whole. One passage is given in the original and in Waser's text as a specimen of Waser's success (I, 419-436). The reviewer incidentally implies that few have read *Hudibras*, and does not think this, in view of the difficulties of the poem, is a matter for surprise. The *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek* in a very short notice of Waser's translation calls it "überhaupt nicht misgerathen."² Herder thought highly of Waser's *Hudibras*.³

Schubart said in his *Vorlesungen über die schönen Wissenschaften*⁴ that Riedel had promised a translation of *Hudibras*, but had never produced it. This promise may have been made, but we are not justified in inferring such a promise from Riedel's own recorded statement. In one of his *Briefe über das Publikum*, one addressed to Klotz, he says: "Sie wissen, wie lange ich schon an einer deutschen Versart gekünstelt habe, durch welche man denjenigen Ton ausdrücken könnte, den ich nicht

¹ II, 1, pp. 273-82. (1766).

² 1766, 2, p. 261.

³ *Sämmtliche Werke* (Suphan) IV, 189. Herder's interest in *Hudibras* is attested by several quotations in his early works, the *Fragmente* and the *Kritische Wälder*; cf. *Sämmtliche Werke* (Suphan), I, 216, 269, 314, 319; II, 221, 301, 392.

⁴ Augsburg, 1777. Schubart says that the "Knittelverse" of Hans Sachs would be the suitable measure for a translation. Flohr thinks Schubart here influenced by Gottsched's opinion: *Geschichte des Knittelverses vom 17ten Jahrhundert bis zur Jugend Goethes*, in *Berliner Beiträge zur germanischen und romanischen Philologie*. Berlin, 1893, pp. 93 ff.

anders als den Hudibrastischen zu nennen weiss; aber das wissen Sie, dass es mir nicht gelungen ist; die Strophen, welche ich vor einiger Zeit Ihnen zuschickte, sind zu nichts nütze und ich bitte Sie das Ding ganz zu unterdrücken. Vielleicht wären nur die drei Zeilen erträglich,—

“Indess posaunt der Pfaff ins Land
Und schlägt die Trommel mit der Hand
Auf seinem Canzelpult.”

Auch hier ist der Sinn des Originals nicht vollkommen übertragen und der Ton der Kriegslieder ist nicht der, in welchem die Buttlerische Muse deutsch singen muss. Vielleicht wären zu dieser Absicht unsere Knittelverse am meisten geschickt, allein der Deutsche ist zu delicat, und wer würde unter uns ein Werk lesen wollen, welches aus zwölf tausend Knittelversen zusammengesetzt wäre.”¹ This does not necessarily imply that Riedel intended to translate the whole of Butler’s masterpiece, and it is quite possible that he, from the standpoint of criticism and æsthetic theory, was simply endeavoring to approximate a measure which might suggest the flavor of the original.

Riedel’s attempt at translation is found entire in Chr. Heinrich Schmid’s *Zusätze zur Theorie der Poesie und Nachrichten von den besten Dichtern*.² Schmid introduces it with the wish, “Könnte ich doch Herrn Riedel bewegen in der Übersetzung des *Hudibras* so fortzufahren als folgende Probe ist.” The translation is not in “Knittelverse” but in a six-line stanza; the first of these stanzas is as follows:—

¹ *Briefe über das Publikum*, Jena, 1768, pp. 117-8.

² *Dritte Sammlung*, Leipzig, 1769, p. 291.

"Hoch sprudelte des Bürgers Wuth
 Man zog ins Feld und heischte Blut
 Und wuste nicht, Warum?
 Man stritt für Frau Religion
 Wie für die Hur ein Bacchus-sohn
 Und wuste nicht, Warum?"

Riedel makes six such stanzas from the first twenty-eight lines of the poem. He alludes to *Hudibras* frequently in illustration of his ideas in the *Theorie der schönen Künste und Wissenschaften*.¹ Riedel's doubts, quoted above, as to the German reader's acceptance of the real *Hudibras* brought forth the following protest from Wieland: "Bekümmern Sie sich nichts darum, ob Ihre höflichen Landsleute den hudibrasischen (!) Ton leiden können oder nicht . . . Sie sollen ihn leiden! Es gibt unter den Lesern mehr feine Köpfe, als mancher deutscher Autor, der nicht Gelegenheit gehabt, *de se faufiler parmi des gens du grand monde*, sich einbildet."² It is worthy of note that Wieland had here in mind a select group of readers and not the reading public in general.

In the June number of Wieland's *Teutscher Merkur*³ for 1778, there is an anonymous fragment entitled *Probe einer neuen Verdeutschung des Hudibras*. Wieland said in the March number for 1779⁴ that this translation had been sent from Königsberg. It is preceded by an introduction which is mainly concerned with the metrical form of the poem. The author herein expresses the opinion that the worth of the poem is so dependent on

¹ *Sämmtliche Werke*, Wien, 1785-7, III.

² Letter to Riedel on August 10, 1768, *Auswahl denkwürdiger Briefe von C. M. Wieland, herausgegeben von L. Wieland*, Wien, 1815, p. 202.

³ Pp. 227-248.

⁴ Pp. 284-5.

the nature of the verse that one must miss even in the best prose translation half of the original's peculiar beauty. This he acknowledges in spite of his indebtedness to Waser for many a fitting expression and many explanations of obscurities. The fact that English and German are cognate languages, he says, should make a faithful translation in German more easily possible than in any other tongue. But when one goes beyond the rendering of English expressions into corresponding German, difficulties are encountered. It is rarely possible to translate English iambic lines by the same number of German lines in the same measure; for English is largely monosyllabic and the polysyllables have for the most part no "chance lengthenings." Two ways are open to the translator; to increase the number of lines, preserving the metre, or to introduce other feet and keep the number of lines. The latter plan is adopted in the present case, though sometimes the increase in the number of lines is not to be avoided.

In this number of the *Merkur* there was published about one-third of the first canto (284 lines); and in the December number of the same year¹ the remainder of the first canto is given, with omission of a part of the description of Ralpho (lines 529-622). The translation is followed by a *Beilage für die Leser des Hudibras*.² This contains a short characterization of Butler and the objects of his satire, but is chiefly devoted to a translation of extracts from Butler's *Remains* as published by Thyer, the characters of "Anabaptist" and "An Hermetic Philosopher"; the latter is somewhat abridged. Some information is given concerning "characters" as

¹ Pp. 201-222.

² Pp. 222-240.

a form of literary composition. Both the translation and the supplement are signed "K." The metre of the translation is quite irregular. There are occasional five-foot couplets, also single five-foot lines, and several quatrains rhyming *abba*, or *abab*; and two triplets. The rhymes are imperfect, the most frequent violence being the rhyming of words ending in *e* and *en*; an occasional attempt at eccentric double rhymes in Hudibrastic style is found, such as, Republik *ab*: Unglück *ab*, Wohnhaus: Person *aus*. The translation is accompanied by a few notes relating mostly to the rendering of individual passages. In one of these notes the translator expressed the opinion that Wernicke's talents would have well fitted him to turn *Hudibras* into German. At the close of the introduction he said that he should be heartily glad if another, prompted by this attempt, should by his own translation put this one to shame. It is probable, however, from the context, that the translator had in his mind at that time a complete version. The *Allegemeine deutsche Bibliothek*¹ attributes to Wieland the introduction to this *Merkur* fragment; it is, however, by the author of the translation itself.

In the March number of the *Merkur* for 1779² Wieland announced that a friend in St. Petersburg had sent him, a few months before, a new translation of the first canto of *Hudibras*; he remarked that this was perhaps not so literally faithful as the attempt of the previous year, but it seemed to him to read more pleasantly because the writer had given his "Knittelverse" a less heavy movement and more roundness. Since the comparison of these two translations with one another and with the

¹ *Anhang*, 53-86. III, pp. 1789-1794.

² Pp. 248-9.

original might afford some readers pleasure, Wieland promised to publish a sample of this version; and in the April number this promise is fulfilled.¹ This fragment was signed "S," and was the first attempt of Dietrich Wilhelm Soltau to render *Hudibras* in German verse. It contained less than a third of the first canto (274 lines), but it appeared in the index as *Hudibras, erster Gesang*, and has been recorded in Goedeke and elsewhere as a translation of the first canto.

At Riga in 1787 the publisher Hartknoch issued Soltau's complete translation.² In the introductory note of two pages Soltau indicated the purposes of Butler's satire, and remarked that the poem would afford little entertainment to one who was not in some measure acquainted with English history. As a consequence, he considered it a thankless task to supply extensive historical and critical comment. The few notes which he has given are mostly taken from Grey. The part of the first canto which had previously appeared in the *Merkur* is very much changed. A very small proportion of the lines remains absolutely unaltered, but it is worthy of note that comparatively few of the changes affect the rhyme words. The verse is smoother, and there are fewer irregularities and deviations from the regular couplet measure. For example, in the whole of the first canto there are but two triplets and one quatrain a b b a, whereas in the 274 lines of the fragment there were three quatrains a b a b and five a b b a, one of these latter being extended into a b b a c c a. There is little endeavor to make eccentric rhymes, and most of the rhymes are masculine. Soltau has omitted many lines.

¹ Pp. 72-82.

² 8vo., pp. 444. *Hudibras frey verdeutscht, dem Herrn Hofrath Wieland zugeeignet von D. W. S.*

In 1797 Soltau brought out at Königsberg a revised edition of his translation.¹ In the brief introduction he says that he has often been asked why he translated *Hudibras* at all, and he gives the following reasons: the position of the poem in English literature, its fund of wit and humor, and the possibility of applying Butler's satire to the "hosenlose Philosophie" at the end of the eighteenth century. He also mentions the advantages possessed by a German translator in the relationship of German to English, and recognizes the necessity of understanding the history of the time in order to appreciate *Hudibras*. Soltau speaks in this edition of the translation of 1787 as "äusserst mangelhaft," and says that it displeased him as soon as it had left the press. Incidentally he calls Waser's translation a "wretched one." Soltau has again smoothed out the irregularities of the verse, and has altered in many cases individual words and expressions in the interest of conciseness, accuracy, and vigor. Less often he has retranslated a passage. Perhaps rather more than half the lines remain entirely unchanged, or altered only by a single word or in the order of words. There are fairly frequent changes affecting the rhymes, perhaps in a fifth of the couplets.

Since Soltau dedicated the completed translation of 1787 to Wieland, the latter gave only a brief notice of it in the *Merkur*, remarking, however, that he found no reason for withdrawing his former approval.² The *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung*³ reviewed Soltau's translation on

¹ Königsberg, bey Nicolovius, pp. 474. A later edition was issued at Reutlingen by Mäcken u. Comp. 1800, I, pp. 280; II, pp. 228.

² *Merkur*, 1787, *Anzeiger* for August, p. cxii.

³ Jena, IV, p. 84, October 9, 1790.

the whole with favor. The critic acknowledges the importance of the metrical form in the original, and agrees that the poem could be most fittingly rendered in German in "Knittelverse." The reviewer is, however, of the opinion that the tone of the translation does not really reproduce that of the original, is rather a substitute for the characteristically Hudibrastic. A specimen of the translation is given, and one error is pointed out, with the hint that more care for accuracy would not have been superfluous. The same journal reviewed Soltau's revised edition with much more out-spoken praise,¹ saying that it might be counted among "den vollendetsten Kunstwerken des poetischen Übersetzer-talents." Soltau is credited with genius for the comic, with taste and unwearying industry. The passages in the former edition which merited criticism have, we are told, been perfected. Soltau's use of false rhymes and of obsolete forms is commended, as well as his ingenious creation of new words. With considerable warmth the reviewer condemns those who hold that the poem is solely personal satire, the effect of which is now lost; he admits that some knowledge of the historical background is essential to a complete understanding of the poem, but asserts that this is no reason for ruining one's enjoyment of its wit and humor. Many passages, he insists, are written for all time; and he gives examples of such passages. The reviewer of Soltau's translation in the *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek*² gives a short account of the previous attempts

¹ July 26, 1800. This review is the foundation of the account of Soltau's translation in Ebeling's *Geschichte der komischen Literatur*, Leipzig, 1869. Much of this review is copied there word for word. Ebeling mentions the review in a foot-note, but makes no real acknowledgment of his indebtedness. III, 105-8.

² *Anhang*, 53-86, III, pp. 1789-94.

to translate *Hudibras*, and notes a passage of thirty-eight lines, first in the original, and then in Waser's and in Soltau's translations. The difficulties involved in making a translation of *Hudibras*, especially in view of the peculiar and characteristic verse of the original, are emphasized here as by no other reviewer. In his opinion, German literature is to be congratulated on this new acquisition, a faithful and readable translation of so valued a poem.

Soltau's translation was also reviewed by the *Göttingische Anzeigen von gelehrten Sachen*, in the issue for January 5, 1788. The critic there quotes Dr. Johnson's opinion of the obstacles to one's enjoyment in reading *Hudibras*. He then queries: "If this is the experience of an Englishman, how must it be with a German, since the book gains its chief value from the faithful delineation of foreign party spirit? And above all with a German who needs a translation?" According to this reviewer, so much must be lost in any translation that one cannot help regretting the labor of the translator, even more when one sees how he has studied and loved the original, and in many ways has achieved a successful version. The reviewer is evidently of the opinion that it is really not worth while to try to translate *Hudibras* into German.¹

After the publication of Soltau's first edition in 1787, there appeared in the *Deutsches Museum*, for September, 1788, a translation of the first canto in verse by Dietrich Wilhelm Andreä.² This is the smoothest of the metrical translations. The rendering it freer than Sol-

¹ There is a review of Soltau's translation in the *Tübing. gel. Anz.*, 1798, pp. 802-7, which I have been unable to examine.

² *Deutsches Museum*, 1788, II, pp. 216-248. See Meusel, *Das gelehrte Deutschland*, 1, pp. 72-3.

tau's and the number of lines in the original (918) has been increased by over one hundred.

Another complete translation of *Hudibras* was published at Vienna in 1811. It bore the misleading title: *Samuel Butler's Hudibras, ein satyrisches Gedicht in neun Gesängen, neu verdeutscht mit historischen Anmerkungen, von Carl Anton von Gruber*. The translation is of slight interest, as it is merely a revision of Waser's book. The introduction is brief; in it Gruber states that the publishers desired to give the well-known Waser translation a purer German text, and to make the difficult passages more easily understood. The changes were made, it was said, from political, moral and æsthetic considerations. The alterations are trivial. The short historical note in the preface is derived from Waser's introduction, and the notes are reproduced from Waser, abridged to a third or a fourth of their original bulk.

In 1845 Josua Eiselein, "Professor und weiland Oberbibliothekar der Universität Heidelberg," published at Freiburg im Breisgau his metrical version of *Hudibras*. The preface is dated at Constance, in September, 1845. The long introduction is a curious patchwork of erudition, constant digression, irrelevant quotation, and pure pedantry. One or two examples from the beginning will show Eiselein's method. After giving the meagre facts concerning Butler's birth and parentage, Eiselein continues: "He was a boy of four years when the greatest writers of Britain and Spain, Shakespeare and Cervantes, died on the same day, April 23, 1616; on this account one is accustomed to apply to them the line from Cornelius Severus,

'Abstulit una dies ævi decus utrumque.'

In the next paragraph, however, the author notes that England accepted the Gregorian calendar in 1752, and hence Shakespeare's death was really ten days earlier. Eiselein cites several instances of coincidence in days of birth and death, and discusses the question of Metempsychosis of great spirits. Wood called Seldon a living library: Eiselein goes to great lengths in explaining the use of this metaphor, giving a Latin epigram on Grotius and a Greek quotation from Gregory Nazianzen. The following paragraph gives Selden's opinion of Ben Jonson. The whole of the introduction is thus filled with digressions and adorned with quotations from Latin and Greek. There is nothing new in the way of criticism or information. Eiselein's narrative of Butler's life is derived from various easily accessible sources; he quotes at some length opinions concerning Butler from Addison, Dryden, Voltaire, and others.

The account of previous German translations given by Eiselein is of interest. From Bodmer's he quotes two passages, the first fourteen lines and the address to the Muse; but the original is not given and there is no comment. As these are precisely the two samples of Bodmer's version which Gottsched gave in the review to which Eiselein later refers, the suspicion is very strong that Eiselein knew Bodmer's work only through this review. Eiselein makes serious errors in regard to the Waser translation. In the first place, he attributes it to another Johann Heinrich Waser, to the unfortunate theologian and author of that name who was executed at Zürich in 1780. After some information concerning this mistaken Waser, there is a discussion of the translation. Eiselein then places in parallel columns five selections from this

translation¹ and the corresponding passages from Townley's; a German prose translation is compared with one in French verse. Eiselein's examination of Waser's work must have been very superficial; for example, he says that Waser made no use of Grey's edition and seemed not to have known the French translation by Townley. It has been seen above that Waser copied very extensively from Grey's edition and referred several times to Townley's work. Eiselein may have derived the idea that Waser did not know this French translation from a note in the review of Waser's work in the *Neue Bibliothek der schönen Wissenschaften*.² Attention is there called to the lines,

"Like commendation nine pence crookt
With—to and from my love—it lookt" (I, 487-8),

which Waser failed to understand, and a note is copied from the French translation giving the correct explanation. Waser's failure to make use of this note may have led Eiselein to make the incorrect assertion. Eiselein copied all of Riedel's stanzas, but without other remark than that Riedel conceived the purpose of translating the poem into German rhymed verses, and that from the examples given, the reader could judge whether the failure to complete the work were a loss to letters. He quotes also from the letter to Klotz. Gruber's translation was known to Eiselein only by name.

Eiselein's acquaintance with Soltau's translation was, however, intimate. He makes no mention of the *Merkur* fragment, and probably did not know of it. Four pas-

¹ The passages are I, 1, 91-104, 189-200, 281-286, 453-456; II, 1113-1178.

² II, 1, pp. 273-283, 1766.

sages from the edition of 1787 are quoted, and Soltau's own opinion of his work as expressed in the edition of 1797 is cited. Then Eiselein says that in ten years more Soltau would have thought his second edition as unworthy as the first. He condemns Soltau's rhymes, his freedom in the use of poetic feet, his lack of simplicity and clearness. Yet Eiselein confesses to have embodied a large number of Soltau's lines in his own translation, not because of indolence, but because he was assured that he could do no better. The translator hopes that his readers will everywhere note in his style the beneficent effect of his study of language; and adduces, as proof, the titles of three books which he has written in this field.

Eiselein's notes are a strange chaos of pedantry. About one-fifth of them, and those the most pertinent, are copied from Grey's edition. About half of the notes are quotations from Latin and Greek authors often only remotely relevant, and cited without any attempt to establish any genuine connection with Butler's work. Among the other notes, there are fairly numerous quotations from Shakespeare, and occasionally from other English authors. Eiselein draws also, in numerous cases, on German literature. For example, in the first canto he quotes from Fischart, Steinhöwel, Hartmann von Aue, Friedrich von Husen, Bürger, Kant, and others; similarly in the second canto he introduces Vridank, the *Kölner Chronik*, the *Kaiserchronik*, Naogeorg, Luther, Uz, and Goethe. He goes to Ulfilas for justification of usage and devotes a long note to the explanation of an Alemannic word which he might have used in his translation but did not. Several times he translates his own lines into Latin, and quite a proportion of his notes is in explanation of matters which he himself has thrust into Butler's text. An edition of

Eiselein's version was published a year later with eight plates, but it contained neither the introduction nor the notes.¹

We have thus three complete translations of *Hudibras* into German. Waser's naturally stands by itself because of its form. In general, a prose translation, because of obvious freedom in choice of expression, in expansion and arrangement, can reproduce the exact meaning of the original more easily than a translation in verse. But in the case of Butler's poem, the form in which he has chosen to express his thought becomes in a peculiar way a part of the thought itself,—that is, it is an essential factor in producing the effect which Butler desired, and so influences the attitude of the reader toward the material presented, that a translation of *Hudibras* which disregards the verse-form must necessarily become a relatively unsatisfactory approximation of Butler's work. When

"There was an ancient sage philosopher
That had read Alexander Ross over"

becomes "Es war ein alter Philosoph, der den Alexander Ross gelesen hatte," a quality has passed out of the lines which is peculiarly Hudibrastic, and without which the translation fails to reproduce the impression made by the original.

Waser translates

¹ Small octavo, pp. 362, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1846. Eiselein's translation is reviewed in the *Wiener Jahrbücher der Literatur*, 1845, Vol. 112, pp. 251-264. The reviewer says that *Hudibras* is little known in Germany, and that Eiselein has performed a distinct service in making so excellent a translation. The introduction is called scholarly. The greater part of this long review is occupied with an account of Butler's life, taken mainly from Eiselein.

“ In school-divinity as able
As he that hight Irrefragable
A second Thomas, or at once
To name them all, another Dunce ”

as follows: “ In der Schul-Theologie wiech er selbst dem Doctor irrefragabilis nicht, war ein zweyter Thomas, oder damit ich sie alle unter einem Namen begreife, ein anderer Dun Scotus.” This may serve as an example of the most natural type of inadequacy in such a translation. There are thus some actual errors in the rendering; but more frequently it is the failure to reproduce the jest which lies beneath the surface. When one considers the difficulties of the poem, one is surprised that the imperfections are not more numerous. The very excellence of Waser's version may well have proved a barrier to other translations in prose.

The relationship between the two poetical translations was very close. Eiselein's plunderings of his predecessor, Soltau, prove upon investigation to have been extensive. One is almost justified in calling Eiselein's work a re-writing of the earlier translation. Eiselein has retained about a third of Soltau's rhymes; he has kept many lines absolutely unchanged, and many more with trifling alterations. The characteristics of Eiselein as a literary worker have been already indicated. These elements of his literary temper have left their inevitable marks on his translation. His rendering is heavy and awkward; but its awkwardness is not, like that of the original text, the result of deliberate purpose, but of Eiselein's own intellectual heaviness. His translation of Butler's jests is successful when the wit is inherent in the matter itself; the manner is less adequately reproduced. The droll epithet and the unusual expression lose much in their German form. The striking contrast involved in the

juxtaposition of genuinely poetic diction and prosaic or even vulgar expressions is largely missed in the translation, which finds a duller level, a middle ground of commonplace phraseology. The narrative passages move slowly as compared with the spirited action in Butler. Eiselein weakens his translation by his confusing attempt to substitute German references for English, or to make allusions more easily intelligible to his readers. For example, in the address to the Muse, Hans Sachs and Schmolke are inserted in place of Withers, Pryn and Vicars. Roger Bacon and Dr. Faust are substituted for Merlin (II, 316), and similar alterations are frequent. Eiselein by implication rebukes Soltau for omission of lines; he himself is also guilty in this regard. For example, the thirty-two lines describing Ralpho's astrological knowledge (I, 589-620) are reduced to eighteen.

The nature of Eiselein's translation, its excellencies and defects, may be best indicated by illustrations. I take quotations mainly from the first canto because it is more familiar. The first lines of the original,

"When civil dudgeon first grew high,
And men fell out they knew not why,
When hard words, jealousies, and fears
Set folks together by the ears,"

are translated,

"Als olim Wahn und Aberwitz
Entglomm Albions Inselsitz,
Wo schwarzer Groll und Volksrumor
Urplötzlich wallten hoch empor."

The following points may be noted: "Wahn und Aberwitz" takes the place of Butler's expressive "dudgeon"; the idea in "civil" is accounted for in "Volksrumor."

The thought of the second line is hardly expressed at all, and the homely expression of the fourth line is not reproduced. "Olim" seems allowable in accordance with Butler's frequent introduction of Latin words. The definite reference to England is also natural in a German translation. "Urplötzlich" contains an added idea.

The familiar passage describing Hudibras's rhetorical accomplishments,—

"For rhetoric, he could not ope
His mouth, but out there flew a trope,
And when he happen'd to break off
I' th' middle of his speech, or cough,
H' had hard words ready to show why,
And tell what rules he did it by:
Else, when with greatest art he spoke
You'd think he talk'd like other folk.
For all a rhetorician's rules
Teach nothing but to name his tools" (I, 81-90)

is translated thus:—

Zum Reden öffnete sich kaum
Sein Maul, so nahm ein Tropus Raum:
Und wenn er manchmal pflag zu husten
Aus Artigkeit, alsogleich mussten
Erprobte Rhetorsregeln zeigen
Warum er husten thät und schweigen.
Kam's aber ihm auf Kunst nicht an,
So sprach er wie ein schlichter Mann:
Und aller Schulwiz, gleich den Spinnen
In Winkel suchte zu entrinnen."

The first part of the translation is faithful and satisfactory, although one misses "out there flew." In the latter part of the quotation the meaning of the original is not completely given.

In the following instance Eiselein gives the spirit of the original, the text being so slightly changed by substitution that the effects are practically identical,—

“Whether the Serpent at the Fall
Had cloven feet or none at all,” (I, 183-4);

translated as,—

“Ob einst die Schlang’ vor Adam’s Falle
Vier Ftiss’ gehabt nebst Klau und Kralle.”

Another example of substitution is—

“Und er ist weithin so bekannt
Als unsrer Erde Leidtrabant ”

for

“Ill has he read, that never hit
On him in Muses’ deathless writ ” (II, 415-16).

Or

“Der Flickreform stand Kerdon treu,
Bis ihre Mode abgieng, bei:
Wenn er gleichwol statt einer Rize
Am morschen Fell riss hundert Schlize ”

representing

“Fast friend he was to reformation
Until ’twas worn quite out of fashion.
Next rectifier of wry law
And would make three to cure one flaw ” (II, 429-32).

Similar substitutions are frequent.

One or two examples of sustained excellence will be of interest.

- (1) “Whose thread of life the fatal sisters
Did twist together with its whiskers,
And twine so close that time should never
In life or death their fortunes sever,
But with his rusty sickle mow
Both down together at a blow ” (I, 275-280).

- (1) "Der Parcen Hand streng in Geweben
Des Bartes hat und Staates Leben
So dicht versponnen und verflochten,
Dass Zeit und Weil sie nicht vermochten
Zu trennen, bis ein Sensenstreich
Wegmaete Bart und Königreich."
- (2) "Thus clad and fortify'd, Sir Knight
From peaceful home set forth to fight.
But first with nimble active force
He got on the outside of his horse;
For having but one stirrup ty'd
T' his saddle on the further side,
It was so short h' had much ado
To reach it with his desp'rate toe.
But after many strains and heaves
He got up to the saddle-eaves
From whence he vaulted into th' seat
With so much vigour, strength, and heat,
That he had almost tumbled over
With his own weight, but did recover
By laying hold on tail and mane
Which oft he us'd instead of rein." (I, 403-418).

(2) This Eiselein renders,

"Also gerüstet zog der Held
Vom stillen Herd ins wilde Feld,
Nachdem er sich mit Müh und Macht
Auf sein erhabnen Thier gebracht.
Ein Stegreif nur am Sattel hieng
Von Länge aber so gering
Dass es den Helden oftmals nekte
Bis er ganz fest im Bügel stekte.
Er setzte an, er stieg und keuchte,
Bis er den Sattel-knopf erreichte,
Und schwang sich dann mit solcher *Hiz*
Und Kraft hinüber in den Siz,
Dass er vom eigenen Gewicht
Oft überkippte, wenn er nicht
Flugs Mähnen und Schweif als Surrogat
Ergrif an seines Zügels statt."

The force of the adjectives "nimble" and "desperate," the drollness of the expression "on the outside of his horse," are lacking in the translation; but otherwise it is competent.

In spite of these efforts to translate *Hudibras* into German, Butler's poem seems to have played little or no part in shaping the German mock-epics. The burlesque epics of the eighteenth century in Germany were developed under the influence of Pope and Boileau. Pope's *Rape of the Lock* particularly served as a model for those who tried their hand at this kind of verse.¹ Delicate persiflage in Pope's manner became quite the fashion in the middle decades of the century, and it is of this type of mock-epic that Goethe speaks in *Dichtung und Wahrheit*.²

That *Hudibras*, compared with the *Rape of the Lock* exerted an insignificant influence is explicable from the nature of the poems themselves. The exquisite grace and

¹ See Erich Petzet, *Die deutschen Nachahmungen des Popeschen Lockenraubs*, in *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Litteraturgeschichte*, N. F., iv, pp. 409-433, 1891. Petzet investigates the comic epics of Zachariae, Pyra, Uz, Dusch, Schönaich, and Löwen. In the introduction to his *Fabeln und Erzählungen in Burcard Waldis Manier* (Frankfurt und Leipzig, 1771), Zachariae expressed a regret that the metre "which we call 'Knittelverse,' and in which the English poem *Hudibras* is written," should have so lost its popularity. He thinks it particularly suited to certain types of comic epics and other forms of burlesque poetry. The *Neue Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek* and the *Merkur* found in Melchoir Striegel, a comic epic by J. F. Ratschky, an imitation of *Hudibras*. The full title was *Melchoir Striegel, ein heroisch-episches Gedicht für Freyheit und Gleichheit*, Wien, 1794. This contained only "die ersten Gesänge"; the complete poem appeared in Leipzig in 1799. The work was evidently inspired by the French Revolution. I have not been able to examine this poem; but the quotations given by the two reviews mentioned above are not in the metre of *Hudibras*. See *Neue Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek*, xxvi, p. 170 and *Merkur*, 1799, III, p. 91.

² Hempel edition, xxi, pp. 23 ff.

wit of Pope's work easily won admiration from those who had been long trained to appreciate those very qualities in French literature. The rougher side of Butler perplexed and repelled. And then further, although much of the satire in *Hudibras* is applicable to all times, still much of the interest in *Hudibras* was local and contemporary. Its satirical thrusts were often intelligible in Germany only after diligent study of religious and social conditions in another country and in another century. The appeal of Butler's poem to the German reading public could be only slight. Many undoubtedly felt this when early attempts at translation were made. Bodmer said with reference to the effort to prevent the publication of Waser's translation: "Man hatte, die Unterdrückung zu rechtfertigen, eingewanöt, ein *Hudibras* für uns wäre Überfluss und unnötig: wir leben nicht mehr in den schwärmerischen Zeiten Karls des ersten."¹ Whatever part individual spite played in this particular matter, it is probable that many were honestly of this opinion. Herder in the *Fragmente über die neuere deutsche Litteratur* implies that in his opinion the Germans are comparatively deficient in humor, and that there is little characteristically fitting for the expression of it in the German language. Humor is, however, peculiarly characteristic of the English, and they are especially fond of it in their literature, "weil diese Laune unübersetzbar und ein heiliger Idiotisme ist." Herder puts *Hudibras* among those works which are in this respect representative. He says further, "an einen deutschen Cervantes, *Hudibras*, *Tristram*, und wie die guten Leute mehr heissen, lässt sich bei unserm *Antonio von Rosalva* bei unserm *Renommisten*, und noch weniger bei andern Schriftstellern gedenken."²

¹ See "Denkmaal."

² *Sämmtliche Werke* (Suphan), II, p. 44-46.

Riedel thought national and individual characteristics inimitable, and mentions Butler in this connection. He says the result would be absurd if a German Superintendent were to imitate Yorick, Oeser to follow Hogarth, or Zachariae to sing like Butler.¹ In another place he queries: "Darf wohl ein Deutscher so schreiben wie Buttler von *Hudibras*?"² Thus in spite of his great admiration for *Hudibras*, frequently attested in his writings, Riedel followed the lead of Zachariae back to Pope when he wrote his own comic epic in prose, *Der Trappenschütze*.³

Wieland probably first knew of Butler through Bodmer. Waser too became one of Wieland's most intimate friends in Switzerland, though before the time of his translation of *Hudibras*. As editor of the *Merkur*, Wieland received two fragmentary translations of *Hudibras* as contributions to that periodical; and his appreciation of Butler's masterpiece is to be inferred from a letter to Riedel, in which he ascribes his friendship for the latter to similarity of tastes, and mentions as exemplifications of this the fact that *Tristram* and *Hudibras* are Riedel's "Leibbücher."⁴ But Wieland did not take Butler as a model when he wrote his own humorous poetry.

Both Sime⁵ and Erich Schmidt⁶ assert that Lessing and Nicolai planned to write a burlesque epic after the

¹ Letter to Flögel, *Sämmtliche Schriften*, Wien, 1787, IV, p. 32.

² *Sämmtliche Schriften*, III, pp. 157 ff. *Über die Laune*.

³ *Der Trappenschütze, ein komisches Heldengedicht in drei Gesängen, von Humphrey Polesworth, Esq. Aus dem Englischen übersetzt*, Halle, 1765, pp. 48.

⁴ *Auswahl denkwürdiger Briefe*, Wien, 1815, p. 198.

⁵ *Life of Lessing*, Boston, 1871, I, pp. 119-20: "in imitation of *Hudibras*."

⁶ *Lessing*, 2te veränderte Auflage, Berlin, 1899, I, p. 266; "nach dem Muster des *Hudibras*."

pattern of *Hudibras*. Knowledge of this proposed work rests entirely on a note made by Nicolai to Lessing's letters.¹ According to Nicolai the plan was made in the Winter of 1756-7, originating with Lessing; but each was to contribute a humorous scene as it might occur to the one or the other. Nicolai took it upon himself to carry out the scheme in "Knittelverse." The following is an outline of the poem as far as Nicolai remembered it. Gottsched, accompanied by "one of his then well-known disciples" as squire, was to ride forth against the Klopstockian seraphs and angels, "durch welche er und seine Poesie verfolgt." The two arrive at Langensalza at the time of the Gregorius festival and attack the children there who are dressed for this festival as angels. The knight and his companion are thrown into prison and condemned to death as "Hexenmeister." A clergyman visits them in their extremity; but learning the object of their knightly enterprise, he is willing to let them die without any ministrations on his part; for he is an admirer of Klopstock. By chance, Klopstock arrives in Langensalza to visit his Fanny, and succeeds in rescuing the prisoners. As a measure of security, Gottsched is committed to the discipline of his wife, and the squire to his father; and the keepers are to be responsible that the two in the future shall "neither ride nor rhyme." One other scene Nicolai recalled. The knight and his squire fall in with a troupe of strolling comedians. Gottsched asks if they do not play his *Cato*. The players call it one of their chief plays, but assert that they cannot perform it then, because their "lustige Person," who would take the role of Portia, has died, and the new "Hanswurst" has not yet learned the part. Gottsched himself takes the role of Portia.

¹ *Sämmtliche Schriften*, Berlin, 1828, **xxix**, pp. 278-81.

Among some drawings made for this poem, Nicolai thought, by a friend named von Breitenbach, was one representing Gottsched in this part. Nicolai says, however, that the whole matter was more a merry idea which they cherished for a time than a serious purpose.

That the poem was to be an imitation of *Hudibras* is simply inferred by these biographers from the description which Nicolai gives. The account of the plan certainly suggests the possibility, but as Nicolai says nothing of Butler, there is not sufficient evidence for the unqualified statement. Further, Erich Schmidt gives the title of the poem as *Die Poeten*: this inference is not warranted by Nicolai's account. Nicolai said: "Ungefähr zu Ende des Jahres 1756, oder zu Anfange des Jahres 1757 wollte ich mit Lessing gemeinschaftlich ein burleskes Heldengedicht auf Gottsched und auf die Reimer aus seiner Schule machen, die Poeten heissen wollten." In this there is obviously no indication of the title. Schmidt and Sime also say that the squire was to represent Schönaich, which may well have been, but Nicolai says nothing to this effect either.¹

Butler is mentioned by Lessing in the fourth *Literaturbrief*² which was dated, January 11, 1759; and Mendelssohn writing to Lessing, December 26, 1755, in a brief discussion of the nature of burlesque, refers to Butler's comparison of a dawn with a lobster.³ These references show Lessing's acquaintance with Butler at

¹ The Danzel-Guhrauer life of Lessing gives an account of this scheme and is more guarded in its statements: "offenbar dem *Hudibras* nachgebildet" and "der Schildknappe wird ohne Zweifel Schönaich gewesen sein." (I, p. 280).

² *Werke*, Hempel, ix, p. 43.

³ *Werke*, Hempel, xx, 2, p. 31.

about the time of this plan for the burlesque on Gottsched, but indicate nothing more.

In that part of Lessing's *Nachlass* designated as *Selbstbetrachtungen, Einfälle, und kleine Aufsätze* is found the following fragment: "Er füllt Därme mit Sand und verkauft sie für Stricke. Wer? Etwa der Dichter, der den Lebenslauf eines Mannes in Dialogen bringt und das Ding für Drama ausschreit?" The first sentence is supposed to be derived from a passage in *Hudibras*. Boxberger first called attention to this possible source (*Archiv für Literaturgeschichte*, iv, pp. 113-4) and the interpretation has been unquestioningly accepted by Redlich in his notes to the Hempel edition,¹ and by Erich Schmidt in his life of Lessing (i, p. 56). The lines in *Hudibras* are,

"For he a rope of sand could twist
As tough as learned Sorbonist" (i, 1, 157).

That Lessing's sentence refers in any way to these lines is, to say the least, somewhat far-fetched.²

Sonnenfels used a quotation from *Hudibras* as a text for an epigram,³ and Goeking also wrote an epigram on Butler.⁴ Butler is mentioned further by Goeking in one of his poetical epistles, that "*An Herrn . . . , einen jungen Dichter.*"⁵ Butler was naturally noted in

¹ *Werke*, Hempel, xix, p. 629.

² Kant actually does refer to these lines, however; see Boxberger, in *Archiv*, as before, and Kant *Werke* edited by Rosenkranz and Schubart, Vol. xi, p. 192. Boxberger in the Kürschner *Lessing* (xiv, 2, p. 431), calls attention to the use of this expression, "ropes of sand" in Ben Jonson's *The Devil is an Ass*, I, Scene 1, and V, Scene 2, Baudissin's translation, i, pp. 168, 280.

³ *Schriften*, Wien, 1783-7, ix, p. 120.

⁴ *Gedichte*, Leipzig, 1780-82, iii, p. 241.

⁵ *Gedichte*, Frankfurt, 1780, i, p. 224.

studies by German critics when they treated of humor or satire: as for example, by Blankenburg in his *Versuch über den Roman*,¹ where Butler is numbered among the "Spötter"; or by Garve in his essay, *Über die Laune*;² or by an anonymous writer in an article with the same title in the *Neue Bibliothek der schönen Wissenschaften*.³ Schubart in his *Vorlesungen über die schönen Wissenschaften* before referred to, calls *Hudibras* "the monarch of comic epics"; a book by Schirach entitled *Über die moralische Schönheit und Philosophie des Lebens*⁴ contains a chapter, *Über die Laune*, in which *Hudibras* is highly praised and called a masterpiece of humor. In his note books, Jean Paul made excerpts from Waser's translation.⁵ Gottlieb Stephanie (der Jüngere) used Butler's presentation of the Roundheads in portraying certain characters in his play, *Die Liebe für den König*.⁶

These are but scattered instances of acquaintance and appreciation; more might be found; yet they could hardly alter the general conclusion concerning *Hudibras* in Germany. The whole case may be summed up as follows. Butler was introduced in the first place by the Swiss, who tried in almost wholesale fashion and often without discrimination to awaken interest in English authors. The fact that *Hudibras* was an English poem which had won great fame and had been praised by later British writers whose taste they esteemed, was sufficient to account for the Swiss effort to bring it to the attention of the German literary world. Appreciation of *Hudibras* was

¹ Leipzig, 1774, p. 205.

² *Neue Bibliothek der schönen Wissenschaften*, LXI, pp. 51-77.

³ *Neue Bibliothek der schönen Wissenschaften*, III, pp. 1 ff.

⁴ Altenburg, 1772.

⁵ *Euphorion*, VI, p. 557.

⁶ *Sämmtliche Schauspiele*, Wien, 1776, III, pp. 269-360.

then and remained the possession of those who represented a cosmopolitan culture. The translations were undoubtedly looked upon by their authors and by the publishers as ingenious literary exercises. Indeed, the author of the fragment published in the *Merkur* said that it was not recommended to the German reading public in general but only to those "welche die Übersetzung nach dem Original zu beurtheilen und zu berichtigen Zeit und Lust haben." *Hudibras* is thus an example of a foreign work which is brought in by enthusiasts, is admired by a few who can know and appreciate it in the original, but which, in spite of the translations, remains for the most part a sealed book to the average reader. Hence it exerts little appreciable influence in shaping literary taste, and fails to become a model for native writers.

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